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(71) Applicants (for all designated States except US):  
SCHLUMBERGER HOLDINGS LIMITED [—/—];  
P.O. Box 71, Craigmuir Chambers, Road Town, Tor-  
tola (VG). SCHLUMBERGER CANADA LIMITED  
[CA/CA]; 525 - 3rd Avenue S.W., Calgary, Alberta T2P

0G4 (CA). SERVICES PETROLIERS SCHLUM-  
BERGER [FR/FR]; 42, rue Saint Dominique, F-75007  
Paris (FR).

(72) Inventors; and

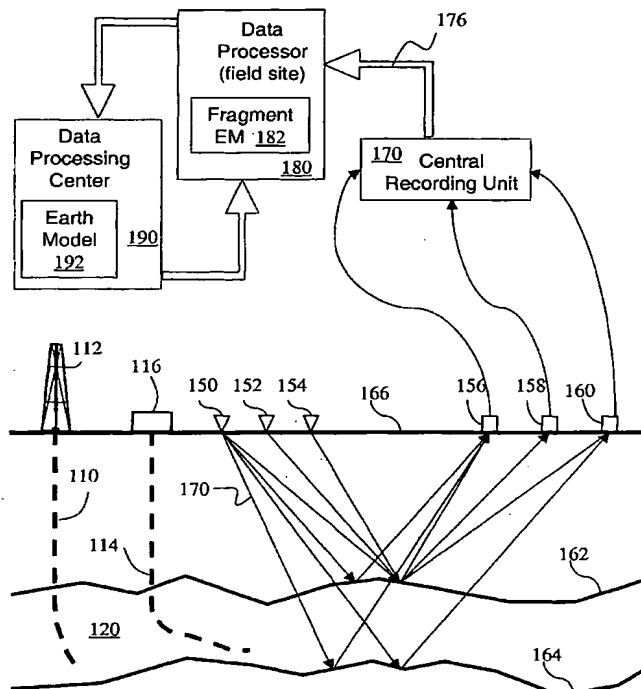
(75) Inventors/Applicants (for US only): ASSA, Steven,  
Brent [US/GB]; 8, The Crescent, Storeys Way, Cambridge  
CB3 0AZ (GB). RAMSHORN, Christoph [DE/GB]; 32  
Humberstone Road, Cambridge CB4 1JF (GB).

(74) Agent: MIRZA, Akram, Karim; Intellectual Property  
Law Department, Schlumberger Cambridge Research Lim-  
ited, High Cross, Maddingley Road, Cambridge CB3 0EL  
(GB).

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(54) Title: SYSTEM AND METHOD FOR REPRESENTING AND PROCESSING AND MODELING SUBTERRANEAN SUR-  
FACES



(57) Abstract: Methods and systems are disclosed for processing data used for hydrocarbon extraction from the earth. Symmetry transformation groups are identified from sampled earth structure data. A set of critical points is identified from the sampled data. Using the symmetry groups and the critical points, a plurality of subdivisions of shapes is generated, which together represent the original earth structures. The symmetry groups correspond to a plurality of shape families, each of which includes a set of predicted critical points. The subdivisions are preferably generated such that a shape family is selected according to a best fit between the critical points from the sampled data and the predicted critical points of the selected shape family.

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